

VII. Claims

What is claimed is:

1. A method of identifying and processing a mailpiece with destination information, comprising the steps of:

5 sorting the mailpiece using a code on the front of the mailpiece, if there is a code on the front of the mailpiece;

identifying the mailpiece using a code on the back of the mailpiece, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front of the mailpiece, and if there is a code on the back of the mailpiece; and

10 sorting the mailpiece in an identification code system, wherein, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front or on the back of the mailpiece, the sorting step further includes the substeps of:

applying an identification code to the back of the mailpiece;

15 applying a postal code to the front of the mailpiece in accordance with the destination information on the mailpiece; and

creating an identification file corresponding to the identification code, wherein the identification file may be accessed by a plurality of nodes in the identification code system.

20 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a geographic coded code.

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3. The method of claim 1, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a bar code.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a POSTNET code.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the identification code on the back of the mailpiece is a printed bar code.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the identification code on the back of the mailpiece is an ID tag.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the identification file includes the identification code.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the identification file further includes the postal code.

9. A system for identifying and processing a mailpiece with destination information, comprising the steps of:

a front code sorting component configured to sort the mailpiece using a code on the front of the mailpiece, if there is a code on the front of the mailpiece;

an identifying component configured to identify the mailpiece using a code on the back of the mailpiece, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front of the mailpiece, and if there is a code on the back of the mailpiece; and

an identification code system sorting component configured to sort the mailpiece in an identification code system, wherein, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front or on the back of the mailpiece, the identification code system sorting component further includes:

an identification code applying component configured to apply an identification code to the back of the mailpiece;

a postal code applying component configured to apply a postal code to the front of the mailpiece in accordance with the destination information on the mailpiece; and

a creating component configured to create an identification file corresponding to the identification code, wherein the identification file may be accessed by a plurality of nodes in the identification code system.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a geographic coded code.

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11. The system of claim 9, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a bar code.

12. The system of claim 9, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a POSTNET code.

13. The system of claim 9, wherein the identification code on the back of the mailpiece is a printed bar code.

14. The system of claim 9, wherein the identification code on the back of the mailpiece is an ID tag.

15. The system of claim 9, wherein the identification file includes the identification code.

16. The system of claim 15, wherein the identification file further includes the postal code.

17. A computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for identifying and processing a mailpiece with destination information, the computer readable code comprising:

a front code sorting module configured to sort the mailpiece using a code on the front of the mailpiece, if there is a code on the front of the mailpiece;

an identifying module configured to identify the mailpiece using a code on the back of the mailpiece, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front of the mailpiece, and if there is a code on the back of the mailpiece; and

an identification code system sorting module configured to sort the mailpiece in an identification code system, wherein, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front or on the back of the mailpiece, the identification code system sorting module further includes:

an identification code applying module configured to apply an identification code to the back of the mailpiece;

a postal code applying module configured to apply a postal code to the front of the mailpiece in accordance with the destination information on the mailpiece; and

a creating module configured to create an identification file corresponding to the identification code, wherein the identification file may be accessed by a plurality of nodes in the identification code system.

18. A system for identifying and processing a mailpiece with destination information, comprising the steps of:

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means for sorting the mailpiece using a code on the front of the mailpiece, if there is a code on the front of the mailpiece;

means for identifying the mailpiece using a code on the back of the mailpiece, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front of the mailpiece, and if there is a code on the back of the mailpiece; and

means for sorting the mailpiece in an identification code system, wherein, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front or on the back of the mailpiece, the sorting means further includes:

means for applying an identification code to the back of the mailpiece;

means for applying a postal code to the front of the mailpiece in accordance with the destination information on the mailpiece; and

means for creating an identification file corresponding to the identification code, wherein the identification file may be accessed by a plurality of nodes in the identification code system.

19. A method of identifying and processing a mailpiece, comprising the steps of:
- sorting the mailpiece using a code on the front of the mailpiece, if there is a code on the front of the mailpiece;
- identifying the mailpiece using a code on the back of the mailpiece, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front of the mailpiece and if there is a code on the back of the mailpiece; and

5 sorting the mailpiece in an identification code system, wherein, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front or on the back of the mailpiece, the sorting step includes the substeps of:

marking the mailpiece with an identification code on the back of the mailpiece at the input system;

taking an image of the mailpiece at an input system;

transmitting the mailpiece from the input system to a holding stack in an output system;

processing the mailpiece image in an identification file determining system to create an identification file for the mailpiece image, wherein the identification file may be accessed by a plurality of nodes in the identification code system;

processing the mailpiece image at a keying site to create the identification file for the mailpiece image, if the identification file determining system did not create the identification file;

transmitting the identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image to the output system; and

associating the identification file for the mailpiece image to the corresponding identification code for the mailpiece at the output system.

20. The method of claim 19, further comprising the step of:

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marking a postal code on the front of the mailpiece based on the identification file associated with the identification code determined in the sorting step.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a geographic coded code.

22. The method of claim 20, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a bar code.

23. The method of claim 20, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a POSTNET code.

24. The method of claim 19, wherein the identification code on the back of the mailpiece is a printed bar code.

25. The method of claim 19, wherein the identification code on the back of the mailpiece is an ID tag.

26. The method of claim 19, wherein the keying site processing step further comprises the substep of:

processing the mailpiece image in order of priority.



27. The method of claim 26, wherein the priority is based on a geographic destination of the mailpiece.

28. The method of claim 19, further comprising the step of:  
transmitting the identification file to a primary identification code server.

29. The method of claim 28, further comprising the step of:  
transmitting the identification file from the primary identification code server to a secondary identification code server.

30. The method of claim 19, further comprising the step of:  
locating an identification file based on the code on the back of the mailpiece, if there is the code on the back of the mailpiece.

31. A system for identifying and processing a mailpiece, comprising:  
a front code sorting component configured to sort the mailpiece using a code on the front of the mailpiece, if there is a code on the front of the mailpiece;  
an identifying component configured to identify the mailpiece using a code on the back of the mailpiece, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front of the mailpiece and if there is a code on the back of the mailpiece; and

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an identification code system sorting component configured to sort the mailpiece in an identification code system, wherein, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front or on the back of the mailpiece, the identification code system sorting component includes:

5 an identification code marking component configured to mark the mailpiece with an identification code on the back of the mailpiece at the input system;

a taking component configured to take an image of the mailpiece at an input system;

10 a mailpiece transmitting component configured to transmit the mailpiece from the input system to a holding stack in an output system;

an identification file determining system processing component configured to process the mailpiece image in an identification file determining system to create an identification file for the mailpiece image, wherein the identification file may be accessed by a plurality of nodes in the identification code system;

15 a keying site processing component configured to process the mailpiece image at a keying site to create the identification file for the mailpiece image, if the identification file determining system did not create the identification file;

an identification file transmitting component configured to transmit the identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image to the output system; and

an associating component configured to associate the identification file for the mailpiece image to the corresponding identification code for the mailpiece at the output system.

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32. The system of claim 31, further comprising:

a postal code marking component configured to mark a postal code on the front of the mailpiece based on the identification file associated with the identification code determined by the identification code system sorting component.

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33. The system of claim 32, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a geographic coded code.

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34. The system of claim 32, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a bar code.

35. The system of claim 32, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a POSTNET code.

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36. The system of claim 31, wherein the identification code on the back of the mailpiece is a printed bar code.

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42. The system of claim 31, further comprising:

a locating component configured to locate an identification file based on the code on the back of the mailpiece, if there is the code on the back of the mailpiece.

43. A system for identifying and processing a mailpiece, comprising:

*first* means for sorting the mailpiece using a code on the front of the mailpiece, if there is a code on the front of the mailpiece;

means for identifying the mailpiece using a code on the back of the mailpiece, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front of the mailpiece and if there is a code on the back of the mailpiece; and

*second* means for sorting the mailpiece in an identification code system, wherein, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front or on the back of the mailpiece, the sorting means includes:

means for marking the mailpiece with an identification code on the back of the mailpiece at the input system;

means for taking an image of the mailpiece at an input system;

means for transmitting the mailpiece from the input system to a holding stack in an output system;

means for processing the mailpiece image in an identification file determining system to create an identification file for the mailpiece image, wherein the identification file may be accessed by a plurality of nodes in the identification code system;

means for processing the mailpiece image at a keying site to create the identification file for the mailpiece image, if the identification file determining system did not create the identification file;

means for transmitting the identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image to the output system; and

means for associating the identification file for the mailpiece image to the corresponding identification code for the mailpiece at the output system.

44. A computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for identifying and processing a mailpiece, the computer readable code comprising:

a front code sorting module configured to sort the mailpiece using a code on the front of the mailpiece, if there is a code on the front of the mailpiece;

an identifying module configured to identify the mailpiece using a code on the back of the mailpiece, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front of the mailpiece and if there is a code on the back of the mailpiece; and

an identification code system sorting module configured to sort the mailpiece in an identification code system, wherein, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front or on the back of the mailpiece, the sorting module includes:

an identification code marking module configured to mark the mailpiece with an identification code on the back of the mailpiece at the input system;

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a taking module configured to take an image of the mailpiece at an input system;

a mailpiece transmitting module configured to transmit the mailpiece from the input system to a holding stack in an output system;

an identification file determining system processing module configured to process the mailpiece image in an identification file determining system to create an identification file for the mailpiece image, wherein the identification file may be accessed by a plurality of nodes in the identification code system;

a keying site processing module configured to process the mailpiece image at a keying site to create the identification file for the mailpiece image, if the identification file determining system did not create the identification file;

an identification file transmitting module configured to transmit the identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image to the output system; and

an associating module configured to associate the identification file for the mailpiece image to the corresponding identification code for the mailpiece at the output system.

45. A method of identifying and processing a mailpiece, comprising the steps of:  
sorting the mailpiece using a code on the front of the mailpiece, if there is a code on the front of the mailpiece;

identifying the mailpiece using a code on the back of the mailpiece, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front of the mailpiece and if there is a code on the back of the mailpiece;

5        sorting the mailpiece in an identification code system, wherein, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front or on the back of the mailpiece, the sorting step includes the substeps of:

         marking the mailpiece with an identification code on the back of the mailpiece at the input subsystem;

         taking an image of the mailpiece using an optical character reader at an  
10        input subsystem;

         transmitting the mailpiece from the input subsystem to a holding stack in an output subsystem;

         transmitting the mailpiece image to an image control unit;

         transmitting the mailpiece image from the image control unit to a remote  
15        computer reader;

         comparing the mailpiece image to a master reference table, by the remote computer reader, to create an identification file for the mailpiece image, wherein the identification file may be accessed by a plurality of nodes in the identification code system;

20        transmitting the identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image to the image control unit, if the remote computer reader created the identification file; and



storing the mailpiece image in an identification code sort image buffer by the remote computer reader, if the identification file was not created by the remote computer reader, wherein the storing step includes the substeps of:

prompting a transmission of a buffer file containing the mailpiece image from the identification code sort image buffer to the image control unit;

transmitting the buffer file from the image control unit to a keying site;

processing the mailpiece image from the buffer file at the keying site to create the identification file for the mailpiece image; and

transmitting the identification file from the keying site to the image control unit;

transmitting the identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image from a decision storage unit at the image control unit to the output subsystem; and

associating the identification file for the mailpiece image to the corresponding identification code for the mailpiece at the output subsystem.

46. The method of claim 45, further comprising the step of:

marking a postal code on the front of the mailpiece based on the identification file associated with the identification code determined in the sorting step.

47. The method of claim 46, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a geographic coded code.

48. The method of claim 46, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a bar code.

49. The method of claim 46, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a POSTNET code.

50. The method of claim 45, wherein the identification code on the back of the mailpiece is a printed bar code.

51. The method of claim 45, wherein the identification code on the back of the mailpiece is an ID tag.

52. The method of claim 45, wherein the processing step further comprises the substep of:

processing the mailpiece image in order of priority.

53. The method of claim 52, wherein the priority is based on a geographic destination of the mailpiece.

54. The method of claim 45, further comprising the step of:  
transmitting the identification file to a primary identification code server.
55. The method of claim 54, further comprising the step of:  
transmitting the identification file from the primary identification code server to a  
secondary identification code server.
56. The method of claim 45, further comprising the step of:  
transmitting the master reference table from a central database to the image  
control unit.
57. The method of claim 45, further comprising the step of:  
transmitting the master reference table from the image control unit to the remote  
computer reader.
58. The method of claim 45, wherein the prompting step includes receiving an end-  
of-run message.
59. The method of claim 45, further comprising the step of:  
locating an identification file based on the code on the back of the mailpiece, if  
there is the code on the back of the mailpiece.

60. A system of identifying and processing a mailpiece, comprising:
- a front code sorting component configured to sort the mailpiece using a code on the front of the mailpiece, if there is a code on the front of the mailpiece;
  - an identifying component configured to identify the mailpiece using a code on the back of the mailpiece, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front of the mailpiece and if there is a code on the back of the mailpiece;
  - an identification code system sorting component configured to sort the mailpiece in an identification code system, wherein, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front or on the back of the mailpiece, the identification code system sorting component includes:
    - an identification code marking component configured to mark the mailpiece with an identification code on the back of the mailpiece at the input subsystem;
    - a taking component configured to take an image of the mailpiece using an optical character reader at an input subsystem;
    - an input subsystem transmitting component configured to transmit the mailpiece from the input subsystem to a holding stack in an output subsystem;
    - an image control unit transmitting component configured to transmit the mailpiece image to an image control unit;
    - a remote computer reader transmitting component configured to transmit the mailpiece image from the image control unit to a remote computer reader;

a comparing component configured to compare the mailpiece image to a master reference table, by the remote computer reader, to create an identification file for the mailpiece image, wherein the identification file may be accessed by a plurality of nodes in the identification code system;

5 an identification file transmitting component configured to transmit the identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image to the image control unit, if the remote computer reader created the identification file; and

10 a storing component configured to store the mailpiece image in an identification code sort image buffer by the remote computer reader, if the identification file was not created by the remote computer reader, wherein the storing component includes:

15 a prompting component configured to prompt a transmission of a buffer file containing the mailpiece image from the identification code sort image buffer to the image control unit;

a buffer file transmitting component configured to transmit the buffer file from the image control unit to a keying site;

a processing component configured to process the mailpiece image from the buffer file at the keying site to create the identification file for the mailpiece image; and

20 a return transmitting component configured to transmit the identification file from the keying site to the image control unit;

an output subsystem transmitting component configured to transmit the identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image from a decision storage unit at the image control unit to the output subsystem; and

an associating component configured to associate the identification file for the mailpiece image to the corresponding identification code for the mailpiece at the output subsystem.

61. The system of claim 60, further comprising:

a postal code marking component configured to mark a postal code on the front of the mailpiece based on the identification file associated with the identification code determined by the identification code system sorting component.

62. The system of claim 61, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is geographic coded code.

63. The system of claim 61, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a bar code.

64. The system of claim 61, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a POSTNET code.

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55. The system of claim 60, wherein the identification code on the back of the mailpiece is a printed bar code.

5 66. The system of claim 60, wherein the identification code on the back of the mailpiece is an ID tag.

67. The system of claim 60, wherein the processing component further comprises:  
a priority processing component configured to process the mailpiece image in order of priority.

68. The system of claim 67, wherein the priority is based on a geographic destination of the mailpiece.

69. The system of claim 60, further comprising:  
a primary identification code server transmitting component configured to transmit the identification file to a primary identification code server.

70. The system of claim 69, further comprising:  
a secondary identification code server transmitting component configured to transmit the identification file from the primary identification code server to a secondary identification code server.

71. The system of claim 60, further comprising:

a central database transmitting component configured to transmit the master reference table from a central database to the image control unit.

72. The system of claim 60, further comprising:

a master reference table transmitting component configured to transmit the master reference table from the image control unit to the remote computer reader.

73. The system of claim 60, wherein the prompting component receives an end-of-run message.

74. The system of claim 60, further comprising:

a locating component configured to locate an identification file based on the code on the back of the mailpiece, if there is the code on the back of the mailpiece.

75. A system for identifying and processing a mailpiece, comprising:

means for sorting the mailpiece using a code on the front of the mailpiece, if there is a code on the front of the mailpiece;

means for identifying the mailpiece using a code on the back of the mailpiece, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front of the mailpiece and if there is a code on the back of the mailpiece;



means for sorting the mailpiece in an identification code system, wherein, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front or on the back of the mailpiece, the sorting means includes:

means for marking the mailpiece with an identification code on the back of the mailpiece at the input subsystem;

means for taking an image of the mailpiece using an optical character reader at an input subsystem;

means for transmitting the mailpiece from the input subsystem to a holding stack in an output subsystem;

means for transmitting the mailpiece image to an image control unit;

means for transmitting the mailpiece image from the image control unit to a remote computer reader;

means for comparing the mailpiece image to a master reference table, by the remote computer reader, to create an identification file for the mailpiece image, wherein the identification file may be accessed by a plurality of nodes in the identification code system;

means for transmitting the identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image to the image control unit, if the remote computer reader created the identification file; and

means for storing the mailpiece image in an identification code sort image buffer by the remote computer reader, if the identification file was not created by the remote computer reader, wherein the storing means includes:

means for prompting a transmission of a buffer file containing the mailpiece image from the identification code sort image buffer to the image control unit;

means for transmitting the buffer file from the image control unit to a keying site;

means for processing the mailpiece image from the buffer file at the keying site to create the identification file for the mailpiece image; and

means for transmitting the identification file from the keying site to the image control unit;

means for transmitting the identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image from a decision storage unit at the image control unit to the output subsystem; and

means for associating the identification file for the mailpiece image to the corresponding identification code for the mailpiece at the output subsystem.

76. A computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for identifying and processing a mailpiece, the computer readable code comprising:

a front code sorting module configured to sort the mailpiece using a code on the front of the mailpiece, if there is a code on the front of the mailpiece;

an identifying module configured to identify the mailpiece using a code on the back of the mailpiece, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front of the mailpiece and if there is a code on the back of the mailpiece;

an identification code system sorting module configured to sort the mailpiece in an identification code system, wherein, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front or on the back of the mailpiece, the sorting module includes:

an identification code marking module configured to mark the mailpiece with an identification code on the back of the mailpiece at the input subsystem;

a taking module configured to take an image of the mailpiece using an optical character reader at an input subsystem;

an input subsystem transmitting module configured to transmit the mailpiece from the input subsystem to a holding stack in an output subsystem;

an image control unit transmitting module configured to transmit the mailpiece image to an image control unit;

a remote computer reader transmitting module configured to transmit the mailpiece image from the image control unit to a remote computer reader;

a comparing module configured to compare the mailpiece image to a master reference table, by the remote computer reader, to create an identification file for the mailpiece image, wherein the identification file may be accessed by a plurality of nodes in the identification code system;

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an identification file transmitting module configured to transmit the identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image to the image control unit, if the remote computer reader created the identification file; and

5 a storing module configured to store the mailpiece image in an identification code sort image buffer by the remote computer reader, if the identification file was not created by the remote computer reader, wherein the storing module includes:

10 a prompting module configured to prompt a transmission of a buffer file containing the mailpiece image from the identification code sort image buffer to the image control unit;

a buffer file transmitting module configured to transmit the buffer file from the image control unit to a keying site;

15 a processing module configured to process the mailpiece image from the buffer file at the keying site to create the identification file for the mailpiece image; and

a return transmitting module configured to transmit the identification file from the keying site to the image control unit;

20 an output subsystem transmitting module configured to transmit the identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image from a decision storage unit at the image control unit to the output subsystem; and

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an associating module configured to associate the identification file for the mailpiece image to the corresponding identification code for the mailpiece at the output subsystem.

5 77. A method of identifying a mailpiece, comprising the steps of:

sorting the mailpiece using a code on the front of the mailpiece, if there is a code on the front of the mailpiece;

10 identifying the mailpiece using a code on the back of the mailpiece, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front of the mailpiece and if there is a code on the back of the mailpiece; and

15 identifying the mailpiece in an identification code system, wherein if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front or on the back of the mailpiece, the identification code system identifying step includes the substeps of:

marking the mailpiece with an identification code on the back of the mailpiece;

marking the mailpiece with a postal code on the front of the mailpiece; and

20 creating an identification file corresponding to the identification code, wherein the identification file may be accessed by a plurality of nodes in the identification code system.

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78. The method of claim 77, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a geographic coded code.

79. The method of claim 77, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a bar code.

80. The method of claim 77, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a POSTNET code.

81. The method of claim 77, wherein the identification code on the back of the mailpiece is a printed bar code.

82. The method of claim 77, wherein the identification code on the back of the mailpiece is an ID tag.

83. A system for identifying a mailpiece, comprising:  
a front code sorting component configured to sort the mailpiece using a code on the front of the mailpiece, if there is a code on the front of the mailpiece;  
a back code identifying component configured to identify the mailpiece using a code on the back of the mailpiece, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front of the mailpiece and if there is a code on the back of the mailpiece; and

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an identification code system identifying component configured to identify the mailpiece in an identification code system, wherein if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front or on the back of the mailpiece, the identification code system identifying component includes:

5 a back code marking component configured to mark the mailpiece with an identification code on the back of the mailpiece;

a front code marking component configured to mark the mailpiece with a postal code on the front of the mailpiece; and

10 a creating component configured to create an identification file corresponding to the identification code, wherein the identification file may be accessed by a plurality of nodes in the identification code system.

84. The system of claim 83, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a geographic coded code.

85. The system of claim 83, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a bar code.

86. The system of claim 83, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a POSTNET code.

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88. The system of claim 83, wherein the identification code on the back of the mailpiece is an ID tag.

means for sorting the mailpiece using a code on the front of the mailpiece, if there is a code on the front of the mailpiece;

means for identifying the mailpiece using a code on the back of the mailpiece, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front of the mailpiece and if there is a code on the back of the mailpiece; and

means for identifying the mailpiece in an identification code system, wherein if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front or on the back of the mailpiece, the identification code system identifying means includes:

means for marking the mailpiece with an identification code on the back of the mailpiece;

means for marking the mailpiece with a postal code on the front of the mailpiece;

and



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a front code marking module configured to mark the mailpiece with a postal code on the front of the mailpiece; and

a creating module configured to create an identification file corresponding to the identification code, wherein the identification file may be accessed by a plurality of nodes in the identification code system.

5 91. A method of sorting a mailpiece, comprising the steps of:

sorting the mailpiece using a code on the front of the mailpiece, if there is a code on the front of the mailpiece;

10 sorting the mailpiece using a code on the back of the mailpiece, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front of the mailpiece and if there is a code on the back of the mailpiece; and

15 sorting the mailpiece in an identification code system, wherein, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front or on the back of the mailpiece, the identification code system sorting step includes the substeps of:

marking the mailpiece with an identification code on the back of the mailpiece;

marking the mailpiece with a postal code on the front of the mailpiece; and

creating an identification file corresponding to the identification code, wherein the identification file may be accessed by a plurality of nodes in the identification code system.

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92. The method of claim 91, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a geographic coded code.

93. The method of claim 91, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a bar code.

94. The method of claim 91, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a POSTNET code.

95. The method of claim 91, wherein the identification code on the back of the mailpiece is a printed bar code.

96. The method of claim 91, wherein the identification code on the back of the mailpiece is an ID tag.

97. A system for sorting a mailpiece, comprising:  
a front code sorting component configured to sort the mailpiece using a code on the front of the mailpiece, if there is a code on the front of the mailpiece;  
a back code sorting component configured to sort the mailpiece using a code on the back of the mailpiece, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front of the mailpiece and if there is a code on the back of the mailpiece; and

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an identification code system sorting component configured to sort the mailpiece in an identification code system, wherein, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front or on the back of the mailpiece, the identification code system sorting component includes:

5 a back code marking component configured to mark the mailpiece with an identification code on the back of the mailpiece;

a front code marking component configured to mark the mailpiece with a postal code on the front of the mailpiece; and

10 creating component configured to create an identification file corresponding to the identification code, wherein the identification file may be accessed by a plurality of nodes in the identification code system.

98. The system of claim 97, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a geographic coded code.

99. The system of claim 97, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a bar code.

100. The system of claim 97, wherein the postal code on the front of the mailpiece is a POSTNET code.

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101. The system of claim 97, wherein the identification code on the back of the mailpiece is a printed bar code.

102. The system of claim 97, wherein the identification code on the back of the mailpiece is an ID tag.

103. A system for sorting a mailpiece, comprising:

means for sorting the mailpiece using a code on the front of the mailpiece, if there is a code on the front of the mailpiece;

means for sorting the mailpiece using a code on the back of the mailpiece, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front of the mailpiece and if there is a code on the back of the mailpiece; and

means for sorting the mailpiece in an identification code system, wherein, if the mailpiece does not have the code on the front or on the back of the mailpiece, the identification code system sorting means includes:

means for marking the mailpiece with an identification code on the back of the mailpiece;

means for marking the mailpiece with a postal code on the front of the mailpiece; and

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a front code marking module configured to mark the mailpiece with a postal code on the front of the mailpiece; and

creating module configured to create an identification file corresponding to the identification code, wherein the identification file may be accessed by a plurality of nodes in the identification code system.

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105. A method of identifying an identification file for a mailpiece image at an image control unit, comprising the steps of:

receiving a mailpiece image from an optical character reader at an input subsystem;

transmitting the mailpiece image to a remote computer reader;

receiving an identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image from the remote computer reader, if the remote computer reader obtained an identification file for the mailpiece image; and

creating the identification file, if the remote computer reader did not obtain the identification file, wherein the creating step includes the substeps of:

transmitting the mailpiece image to a keying site; and

receiving the identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image from the keying site.

106. The method of claim 105, further comprising the step of:

transmitting the identification file from a decision storage unit to an output subsystem.

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107. The method of claim 105, further comprising the step of:  
transmitting the identification file to a primary identification code server.

108. The method of claim 107, further comprising the step of:  
transmitting the identification file from the primary identification code server to a  
secondary identification code server.

109. The method of claim 105, further comprising the steps of:  
receiving a master reference table of identification information from a central  
database; and  
transmitting the master reference table to the remote computer reader.

110. The method of claim 109, wherein the identification file receiving step occurs, if  
the remote computer reader obtained an identification file for the mailpiece image  
based on the master reference table.

111. The method of claim 105, wherein the creating step further comprises the  
substep of:  
receiving the mailpiece image from an identification code sort image buffer.



112. The method of claim 111, wherein the mailpiece image received from the identification code sort image buffer step has been marked for processing at a keying site.

5 113. A system for identifying an identification file for a mailpiece image at an image control unit, comprising:

a mailpiece image receiving component configured to receive a mailpiece image from an optical character reader at an input subsystem;

10 a remote computer reader transmitting component configured to transmit the mailpiece image to a remote computer reader;

15 a remote computer reader receiving component configured to receive an identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image from the remote computer reader, if the remote computer reader obtained an identification file for the mailpiece image; and

a creating component configured to create the identification file, if the remote computer reader did not obtain the identification file, wherein the creating component includes:

a keying site transmitting component configured to transmit the mailpiece image to a keying site; and

20 a keying site receiving component configured to receive the identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image from the keying site.

114. The system of claim 113, further comprising:

a decision storage unit transmitting component configured to transmit the identification file from a decision storage unit to an output subsystem.

115. The system of claim 113, further comprising:

a primary identification code server transmitting component configured to transmit the identification file to a primary identification code server.

116. The system of claim 115, further comprising:

a secondary identification code server transmitting component configured to transmit the identification file from the primary identification code server to a secondary identification code server.

117. The system of claim 113, further comprising:

a master reference table receiving component configured to receive a master reference table of identification information from a central database; and

a master reference table transmitting component configured to transmit the master reference table to the remote computer reader.

118. The system of claim 117, wherein the identification file receiving component receives, if the remote computer reader obtained an identification file for the mailpiece image based on the master reference table.

5 119. The system of claim 113, wherein the creating component further comprises:  
an identification code sort image buffer receiving component configured to receive the mailpiece image from an identification code sort image buffer.

120. The system of claim 119, wherein the mailpiece image received from the identification code sort image buffer has been marked for processing at a keying site.

121. A system for identifying an identification file for a mailpiece image at an image control unit, comprising:

means for receiving a mailpiece image from an optical character reader at an input subsystem;

means for transmitting the mailpiece image to a remote computer reader;

means for receiving an identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image from the remote computer reader, if the remote computer reader obtained an identification file for the mailpiece image; and

means for creating the identification file, if the remote computer reader did not obtain the identification file, wherein the creating means includes:

means for transmitting the mailpiece image to a keying site; and

means for receiving the identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image from the keying site.

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122. A computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for identifying an identification file for a mailpiece image at an image control unit, the computer readable code comprising:

a mailpiece image receiving module configured to receive a mailpiece image from an optical character reader at an input subsystem;

a remote computer reader transmitting module configured to transmit the mailpiece image to a remote computer reader;

a remote computer reader receiving module configured to receive an identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image from the remote computer reader, if the remote computer reader obtained an identification file for the mailpiece image; and

a creating module configured to create the identification file, if the remote computer reader did not obtain the identification file, wherein the creating module includes:

a keying site transmitting module configured to transmit the mailpiece image to a keying site; and

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a keying site receiving module configured to receive the identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image from the keying site.

123. A method of sorting a mailpiece image at a remote computer reader, comprising the steps of:

receiving the mailpiece image from an image control unit;

receiving a master reference table of identification information from the image control unit;

comparing the mailpiece image to the master reference table to create an identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image; and

transmitting the identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image to the image control unit, if the identification file was created by comparing the mailpiece image to the master reference table.

124. The method of claim 123, wherein the buffer is an identification code sort image buffer.

125. The method of claim 123, further comprising the step of:

storing the mailpiece image in a buffer, if the identification code was not created by comparing the mailpiece image to the master reference table.

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126. The method of claim 125, wherein the storing step further comprises the steps of:

assigning a priority designation to the mailpiece image based on the master reference table; and

transmitting the priority designation for the mailpiece image to the buffer.

127. A system for sorting a mailpiece image at a remote computer reader, comprising:

a mailpiece image receiving component configured to receive the mailpiece image from an image control unit;

a master reference table receiving component configured to receive a master reference table of identification information from the image control unit;

a comparing component configured to compare the mailpiece image to the master reference table to create an identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image; and

an identification file transmitting component configured to transmit the identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image to the image control unit, if the identification file was created by comparing the mailpiece image to the master reference table.

128. The system of claim 127, wherein the buffer is an identification code sort image buffer.

129. The system of claim 127, further comprising:

a storing component configured to store the mailpiece image in a buffer, if the identification code was not created by comparing the mailpiece image to the master reference table.

130. The system of claim 129, wherein the storing component further comprises:

an assigning component configured to assign a priority designation to the mailpiece image based on the master reference table; and

a priority designation transmitting component configured to the priority designation for the mailpiece image to the buffer.

131. A system for sorting a mailpiece image at a remote computer reader, comprising:

means for receiving the mailpiece image from an image control unit;

means for receiving a master reference table of identification information from the image control unit;

means for comparing the mailpiece image to the master reference table to create an identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image; and

means for transmitting the identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image to the image control unit, if the identification file was created by comparing the mailpiece image to the master reference table.

5 132. A computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for sorting a mailpiece image at a remote computer reader, the computer readable code comprising:

a mailpiece image receiving module configured to receive the mailpiece image from an image control unit;

10 a master reference table receiving module configured to receive a master reference table of identification information from the image control unit;

a comparing module configured to compare the mailpiece image to the master reference table to create an identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image;

and

15 an identification file transmitting module configured to transmit the identification file corresponding to the mailpiece image to the image control unit, if the identification file was created by comparing the mailpiece image to the master reference table.

20 133. A method of storing a mailpiece image in a buffer, comprising the steps of:

receiving a file from a remote computer reader, wherein the file contains a mailpiece image;



storing the mailpiece image in a buffer;  
receiving a prompt from the remote computer reader; and  
transmitting the file from the buffer to an image control unit, upon receipt of the  
prompt.

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134. The method of claim 133, wherein the buffer is an identification code sort image  
buffer.

135. The method of claim 133, wherein the prompt is an end-of-run message.

136. The method of claim 133, wherein the file is a buffer file.

137. The method of claim 133, wherein the file received from the remote computer  
reader further comprises a priority designation.

138. The method of claim 137, wherein the storing step further comprises the  
substep of:

storing the mailpiece image in the buffer according to the priority designation.

139. The method of claim 138, wherein the transmitting step further comprises the  
substep of:

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transmitting the file from the buffer to the image control unit in order of priority designation, upon receipt of the prompt.

140. A system for storing a mailpiece image in a buffer, comprising:

a file receiving component configured to receive a file from a remote computer reader, wherein the file contains a mailpiece image;

a mailpiece image storing component configured to store the mailpiece image in a buffer;

a prompt receiving component configured to receive a prompt from the remote computer reader; and

a file transmitting component configured to transmit the file from the buffer to an image control unit, upon receipt of the prompt.

141. The system of claim 140, wherein the buffer is an identification code sort image buffer.

142. The system of claim 140, wherein the prompt is an end-of-run message.

143. The system of claim 140, wherein the file is a buffer file.

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144. The system of claim 140, wherein the file received from the remote computer reader further comprises a priority designation.

145. The system of claim 144, wherein the mailpiece image storing component further comprises:

a priority storing component configured to store the mailpiece image in the buffer according to the priority designation.

146. The system of claim 145, wherein the file transmitting component further comprises:

a priority transmitting component configured to transmit the file from the buffer to the image control unit in order of priority designation, upon receipt of the prompt.

147. A system for storing a mailpiece image in a buffer, comprising:

means for receiving a file from a remote computer reader, wherein the file contains a mailpiece image;

means for storing the mailpiece image in a buffer;

means for receiving a prompt from the remote computer reader; and

means for transmitting the file from the buffer to an image control unit, upon receipt of the prompt.

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148. A computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for storing a mailpiece image in a buffer, the computer readable code comprising:

a file receiving module configured to receive a file from a remote computer reader, wherein the file contains a mailpiece image;

a mailpiece image storing module configured to store the mailpiece image in a buffer;

a prompt receiving module configured to receive a prompt from the remote computer reader; and

a file transmitting module configured to transmit the file from the buffer to an image control unit, upon receipt of the prompt.

149. A method of identifying a mailpiece image at a keying site, comprising the steps of:

receiving a file from an image control unit, wherein the file contains a mailpiece image;

processing the mailpiece image to identify the mailpiece image, wherein the processing step further comprises the substeps of:

presenting the mailpiece image to an operator at a viewing station;

identifying the mailpiece image by the operator at the viewing station; and

creating an identification file based on the identification of the mailpiece image by the operator at the viewing station; and

transmitting the identification file to the image control unit.

150. The method of claim 149, wherein the file received from the image control unit further comprises a priority designation.

151. The method of claim 150, wherein the processing step further comprises the substep of:

processing the mailpiece image in order of priority designation.

152. The method of claim 151, wherein the transmitting step further comprises the substep of:

transmitting the identification file to the image control unit in order of priority designation.

153. A system for identifying a mailpiece image at a keying site, comprising:

a receiving component configured to receive a file from an image control unit, wherein the file contains a mailpiece image;

a mailpiece image processing component configured to process the mailpiece image to identify the mailpiece image, wherein the mailpiece image processing component further comprises:

a presenting component configured to present the mailpiece image to an operator at a viewing station;

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an identifying component configured to identify the mailpiece image by the operator at the viewing station; and

a creating component configured to create an identification file based on the identification of the mailpiece image by the operator at the viewing station; and

an identification file transmitting component configured to transmit the identification file to the image control unit.

154. The system of claim 153, wherein the file received from the image control unit further comprises a priority designation.

155. The system of claim 154, wherein the mailpiece image processing component further comprises:

a priority processing component configured to process the mailpiece image in order of priority designation.

156. The system of claim 155, wherein the identification file transmitting component further comprises:

a priority transmitting component configured to transmit the identification file to the image control unit in order of priority designation.

157. A system for identifying a mailpiece image at a keying site, comprising:

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means for receiving a file from an image control unit, wherein the file contains a mailpiece image;

means for processing the mailpiece image to identify the mailpiece image, wherein the processing means further comprises:

means for presenting the mailpiece image to an operator at a viewing station;

means for identifying the mailpiece image by the operator at the viewing station; and

means for creating an identification file based on the identification of the mailpiece image by the operator at the viewing station; and

means for transmitting the identification file to the image control unit.

158. A computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for identifying a mailpiece image at a keying site, the computer readable code comprising:

a receiving module configured to receive a file from an image control unit, wherein the file contains a mailpiece image;

a mailpiece image processing module configured to process the mailpiece image to identify the mailpiece image, wherein the processing module further comprises:

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a presenting module configured to present the mailpiece image to an operator at a viewing station;

an identifying module configured to identify the mailpiece image by the operator at the viewing station; and

a creating module configured to create an identification file based on the identification of the mailpiece image by the operator at the viewing station; and

an identification file transmitting module configured to transmit the identification file to the image control unit.

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